



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION III  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029**

August 27, 2007

Amy Guise  
Chief, Civil Project Development Branch  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 1715  
Baltimore, MD 21203-1715

Attn: Christopher Spaur,

RE: Atlantic Coast of Maryland Shoreline Protection Project Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for (SEIS) General Reevaluation Study: Borrow Sources for 2010 – 2044. CEQ No 20070274

Dear Ms. Guise:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above mentioned SEIS for the Atlantic Coast of Maryland Shoreline Protection Project in accordance with the National Environmental Policies Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The SEIS evaluates impacts of proposed dredging of several new offshore shoals to provide sand for the shoreline protection project from 2010 to 2044.

It has been determined that between 6,800,000 and 15,000,000 cubic yards of sand would be needed through 2044. Offshore shoals are the best sources since they contain large quantities of suitable sand that can be cost-effectively obtained. Three shoals in Federal water were recommended: Weaver Shoal, Isle of Wight Shoal and Shoal "A". Suitable sand was also identified at Shoal "B" however that shoal is currently an important fishing ground and will not be utilized unless future evaluations find the relative value as a fishing ground has substantially declined.

The document uses a no action alternative as a baseline for comparison as required by NEPA. In accordance with NEPA, EPA is rating the Proposed Action as Environmental Concerns (EC), Sufficient Information (1) because of its potential impacts to irretrievable environmental resources. For more information on our rating guidelines go to: [www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/comments/ratings.html](http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/comments/ratings.html)

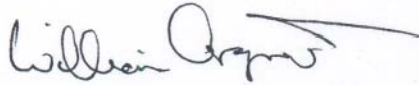
Offshore shoals form through a natural process that takes thousands of years. These shoals appear to serve as orientation features and staging grounds for migrating fish and wildlife. Shoals can provide valuable fish habitat. For these reasons EPA has some environmental concerns for this project. However, we are satisfied that the Corps has adequately considered mitigation and monitoring measures associated with the borrow plan which will effectively maintain the shoal profiles and the long term habitat functions for marine life. The project can be



adjusted at anytime if conditions change, such as an increase in fish habitat, that would warrant a re-evaluation of the borrow plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to this document. If you have any questions regarding our comments please contact Jamie Davis at 215-814-5569 or by email at [davis.jamie@epa.gov](mailto:davis.jamie@epa.gov) or Jessica Martinsen at 215-814-5144 or by email [martinsen.jessica@epa.gov](mailto:martinsen.jessica@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Arguto", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

William Arguto  
NEPA Team Leader  
Office of Environmental Programs

